During the year, only 56 miles of compartment lines as against 152 in the previous year were cut and cleared, at an average cost of Rs. 9-12-3 per mile, which cost rate is in excess of that of the last year by about Rs. 2 in consequence of the difficulty of procuring labour at reasonable rates, due to the outbreak of the plague.

Progress made in cutting up forests into compartments.

46. The year's work and that remaining to be done is exhibited in the following statement:—

Division.	Area cut up into compartments up to 1st July 1896.		Area cut up during 1896-97.		Total area cut up into compartments.		Area still remaining to be cut up.
	Acres.	Length in miles of rides 20 feet wide.	Acres.	Length in miles of rides 20 feet wide.	Acres.	Length in miles of rides 20 feet wide.	Acres.
Sukkur ...	*203,307	1,310	5,870	17	209,177	1,327	78,541
Naushahro ...	*83,764	523	1,668	4	85,432	527	71,368
Hyderabad ...	103 055	530	5,022	29	108,077	559	10,900
Jerruck ...	96,196	561	1,200	6	97,396	567	20,070
Total ...	486,322	2,924	13,760	56	500,082	2,980	180,879

* Disforested area has been excluded.

(b) Annual Plans of Operations.

Annual Plans of Operations.

47. The provision of the plans it was somewhat difficult, in a year like that of 1896-97 in which pestilence raged throughout the province, to adhere to. When quarantine and other restrictions were first imposed, there was a wide spread scare among-t the coupe contractors and their work people, which was with considerable difficulty somewhat appeased. Operations in some forests actually came to a stand still, and additional time to exploit the remaining material in such coupes as were left wholly or partially unworked at the expiry of the contract period had to be granted.

II.—Working of the year.

(a) Communications and Buildings.

(1) Roads.

Roads.

48. As explained in paragraph 39 of the Administration Report for the year 1894-95, hardly any necessity exists for undertaking the construction of any expensive forest roads.

(2) Buildings.

Buildings.

49. The expenditure on buildings as compared with that of the previous year was as follows:—

Year.	New work.	Repairs.	Total.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1895-96 ...	212	335	547
1896-97 ...	122	335	457

50. A good deal of work remains to be done in all divisions under this head in building quarters for the subordinate staff. In this respect, the Jerruck Division is the worst, in which during the year three new *landhis* were erected at a cost of Rs. 122.